

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 11911 011156Z
ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8582
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR PEPR PGOV EG IS US
SUBJECT: EGYPTIANS SOMEWHAT REASSURED BY U.S. DENIAL OF
CHANGE IN POLICY

REF: (A) CAIRO 11902, (B) STATE 110082

SUMMARY: WHITE HOUSE DENIAL OF CHANGE OF POLICY GETS
GOOD PLAY MAY 1. FORMIN KAMEL'S EXPRESSION OF "DEEP
CONCERN" AND REITERATION OF GOE POSITION ALSO MAJOR STORY.
EDITORIALS DEPLORE ISRAELI ZIONIST PRESSURE ON U.S. BUT
REVEAL FEAR IT WORKING. DESPITE WH DENIAL AND REASSURING
REMARKS BY SECRETARY SOME HARM DONE TO CONFIDENCE IN
U.S. STEADFASTNESS HAS BEEN DONE. SADAT'S MAY DAY SPEECH
TOMORROW MAY CONTAIN SOME "ELECTRIC SHOCKS." END SUMMARY.

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1. NO CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY. ALL THREE MAJOR DAILIES
CARRY ON FRONT PAGE WHITE HOUSE DENIAL OF ANY CHANGE IN
U.S. ME POLICY. GUMHURIYYA HEADLINES: "NO CHANGE IN
AMERICAN POLICY." ALSO COVERED IS SECRETARY VANCE'S
TV STATEMENTS ON IMPORTANCE AIRCRAFT PACKAGE TO MAINTAIN
U.S. TIES TO MODERATE ARABS.

2. FORMIN KAMEL-AMBASSADOR MEETING. OTHER MAJOR STORY IS KAMEL'S EXPRESSION OF "DEEP CONCERN" TO AMBASSADOR EILTS APRIL 30 OVER STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO PRES CARTER. KAMEL SAID TO HAVE (A) TOTALLY REJECTED BEGIN PLAN FOR WB AND GAZA; (B) INSISTED THAT PALESTINIAN QUESTION IS CRUX OF THE CDET OBLEM; (C) INSISTED ON TOTAL WITHDRAWAL; (D) CALLED FOR RECOGNITION OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, INCLUDING RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION; AND (E) DENOUNCED "EXPANSIONIST" AIMS OF ISRAEL AS ILLUS-TRATED BY BEGIN SELF-RULE PLAN. KAMEL ASKED THAT "U.S. ADHERE TO THESE PRINCIPLES, WHICH WORLD COMMUNITY HAS APPROVED" (BANNER HEADLINE IN AHAM).

3. EDITORIALS. AHAM CALLS ISRAELI "MANEUVERS" IN U.S. VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE AND INTERFERENCE IN U.S. INTERNAL AFFAIRS SINCE AIRCRAFT PACKAGE REPRESENTS U.S. VITAL INTERESTS. "WHEN ISRAEL SEES CONTRADICTION BETWEEN ITS INTERESTS AND BROADER INTERESTS OF U.S., IT THROWS ALL ITS WEIGHT BEHIND ITS OWN INTERESTS WITHOUT ANY OTHER CONSIDERATION." GUMHURIYYA SEES U.S. AND ISRAEL ACTING IN MANNER TO SLOW DOWN TEMPO CREATED BY SADAT PEACE INITIATIVE SO THAT IT BECOMES REPETITION OF JARRING MISSION OR KISSINGER'S SHUTTLES. NOBODY EXPECTED A SETTLEMENT OVERNIGHT, BUT SADAT GAVE U.S. "OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME" TO EXERT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL IF IT REALLY WANTS TO ESTABLISH PEACE IN THE AREA.
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4. PRIVATE GLOOM. AT DUTCH NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION LAST EVENING (PRIOR TO NEWS OF WH DENIAL), EGYPTIAN GLOOM WAS HEAVY. ONE EDITOR SAID ALL-DAY DISCUSSION AMONG AHAM JOURNALISTS HAD CONCLUDED THAT CARTER STATEMENTS COUPLED WITH ARMS DECISION WERE "KNOCKOUT BLOW" TO SADAT. SUCCESS OF BOTH HIS FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES WERE TOTALLY ON U.S. FORCE PEACE ON ISRAEL. CARTER STATEMENTS, INCLUDING HIS OWN CLAIM THAT HE UNABLE INFLUENCE ISRAEL, MEANT THIS WASN'T GOING TO HAPPEN. THUS, EDITOR ARGUED, SADAT HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO WITHDRAW PEACE INITIATIVE OR STEP DOWN.

5. COMMENT: DENIAL AND SECRETARY'S STATEMENTS HELPFUL AND REASSURING TO GOE. NEVERTHELESS, SOME DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE IN U.S. STEADFASTNESS HAS BEEN DONE AND EGYPTIANS WILL BE LOOKING HARD AT U.S. STATEMENTS DURING BEGIN VISIT AND DURING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON A/C PACKAGE. SADAT'S MAY DAY SPEECH TOMORROW LIKELY TO ADDRESS PROBLEM OF DECLINING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN PEACE PROCESS AS WELL AS SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. WE DO NOT RULE OUT "ELECTRIC SHOCKS" (PRESIDENT'S FAVORED JOURNALIST

HEARD TO REMARK THAT PM SALEM TO BE REPLACED AS WELL AS
OTHER CABINET MEMBERS). ELTS

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